(b) what is the cost of production in comparison with other countries; and

(c) what are the reasons for high cost of production in our country and what steps are being taken to reduce the cost of production?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S. B. NYAMAGOUDA): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on Table of the House.

Srilankan charge against India for Aborting SAARC Summit

275. SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY:
SHRI RANJIT SINGH:
SARDAR JAGJIT SINGH AURORA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the reported Srilankan accusation against India of sabotaging the SAARC summit meeting; and

(b) if so, what measures the Government of India have taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs has, through Press Statements of November 6, 7 and 13 given a full account of the stand taken by the Government of India. Propriety and principle require that Heads of State/ Government of all Member States should be enabled to participate in SAARC Summits. The very essense of SAARC Summit is decision by unanimity through personal consultations among the Heads of State/ Government. The suggestion to hold Summit meetings with representatives or substitutes would adversely affect the long-term and larger interests of SAARC.

Subsidies to Handloom Weavers

276. SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of weavers of Delhi Pradesh Dalit Samaj surrendered "Charkhas" at the Samadhi of Mahatma Gandhi on 2nd October, 1991 in protest against Government's policy of previding subsidies to handloom weavers vis-a-vis their colleagues working in mills;

(b) whether it is a fact that the National Textile Corporation employ only one lakh workers in their mills while the handloom industries give employment to 15 lakh workers;

(c) whether it is also a fact that during 1988-89. Government granted only Rs. 35 crores as subsidy to handloom industry whereas Rs. 285 crore subsidy was given to National Textile Corporation Mills; and

(d) if so, whether there is any proposal with Government for the fresh reappraisal of the subsidy policy for the greater interest of a large number of handloom workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) Government is not aware of any such incident.

(b) The National Textile Corporation provides employment to about 1.70 lakh persons including officials. According to the National Handloom Census (1987-88), about 65.33 lakh persons are engaged in the preparatory and weaving activity in the handloom sector.

(c) No, Sir. During the year 1988-89 a sum of Rs. 27.80 crores was released to the National Textile Cor-

poration as subsidy for production of controlled cloth while in the handloom sector a sum of Rs. 145.76 crores was spent as subsidy on Janata cloth and Rebate Schemes.

(d) Does not arise.

Development of Tourism in North Eastern States

277. SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the North Eastern Council has taken up new scheme for infrastructural development of tourism in the North Eastern States; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Measures to tone up Airport Management

278. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) what measures have been introduced by Government during the last four months to tone up airport management all over the country;

(b) whether any services have been privatised since then; and

(c) what measures are proposed to be taken to improve personnel behaviour, better use of existing facilities to make passengers receive better treatment than hitherto?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA): (a) Some of the important measures introduced to tone up the Airport Management are as given below:—

(i) Periodical meetings of various categories of employees at airports are being held at the level of Airport Director or Station in-Charge which have helped to inculcate the general awareness towards customer's satisfaction and improved customers' services.

(ii) Suggestions/Complaint Boxes have been installed at all the airports and the necessary follow-up action on these are initiated accordingly.

(iii) Continuous efforts are being made by the Management as well as by local Airport Incharges to improve the facilities.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) As an on-going process, the employees are continuously indoctrinated to display courteous behaviour and to ensure better customers' services. Periodical review of the existing facilities are being made to improve these so that the passengers are treated with greater care and attention.

Meeting the increasing needs for Hotel Accommodation of Middle Class Indian Travellers

279. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to privatise the ITDC hotels fully or partially;

(b) if so, what are the plans underway;

(c) whether Government are aware of the need to make available hotel accommodation for the middle class Indian travellers;

(d) if so, the details of any concrete measures taken by Government to meet this need, now recognised as "Novotel" category of hotels; and